

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8082

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11832

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ABLD, CPRS, EG

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL US CLAIMS AGAINST EGYPT: PORT SAID CONSULATE

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH DEPUTY ASST. LEGAL ADVISER HUANG AND POLCOUNS NOV 19 ON SEPARATE SUBJECT (REFTEL) MFA DIR NORTH AMERICAN DEPT TOHAMI AND US DESK OFFICER BORAI MADE SPONTANEOUS AND PERSONAL APPEAL FOR SPECIAL USG CONSIDERATION IN PRESSING CLAIM FOR DAMAGES TO PORT SAID CONSULATE. THEY FULLY RECOGNIZED LEGAL VALIDITY OF U.S. CASE AND EGYPT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT CONSULAR PROPERTY. HOWEVER, BOTH OFFICIALS SAID PORT SAID WAS SUBJECT OF SPECIAL SENSITIVITY FOR EGYPTIANS AND 1967 WAS TIME OF DEEP FEELINGS AGAINST U.S. THEY DID NOT FURTHER ELABORATE EXCEPT FOR REFERENCE TO NEAR TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF PORT SAID BY ISRAELI ARMS. TOHAMI SAID IF USG WERE TO PRESS CLAIM, HE HOPED IT WOULD BE FOR NOMINAL AMOUNT. EMBOFFS MADE CLEAR THEY WERE NOT IN POSITION TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF CLAIM.

2. WE HAVE NOT YET FORMALLY SUBMITTED THIS CLAIM AND ARE NOW IN PROCESS OF EVALUATING DATA AVAILABLE. IN THIS CONNECTION WOULD APPRECIATE NEA/EX AND FBO SEARCH OF FILES TO SEE IF 1967 INVENTORY OF FURNITURE AND OTHER CONTENTS OF CONSULATE AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON.

3. COMMENT: THESE FEELINGS WERE EXPRESSED BY TWO OF OUR BEST FRIENDS IN EGYPTIAN BUREAUCRACY. WHILE TOHAMI AND BORAI DID NOT WISH TO BE EXPLICIT, SURELY IN THEIR MINDS WAS EGYPTIAN BELIEF THAT ISRAELI DESTRUCTION OF PORT SAID WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH AMERICAN ARMS. SINCE SETTLEMENT OF EACH CLAIM REQUIRES NUMEROUS INTRA-MINISTERIAL CLEARANCES THEY

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MUST ALSO HAVE HAD IN MIND THAT MFA WOULD BE PLEADING US

CASE WITH OTHER MINISTRIES. EMBASSY BELIEVES THERE IS
SOME VALIDITY TO TOHAMI SUGGESTION FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT.
HOWEVER, UNTIL WE SEE HOW GOE CARRIES OUT PRIVATE CLAIMS
AGREEMENT AND RESOLVES AMERICAN CENTER PROBLEM AND OTHER
OFFICIAL CLAIMS, RECOMMEND THAT WE DO NOT REACT IN ANY WAY TO
THIS "PERSONAL" APPROACH.
EILTS

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